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SAFER CIGARETTES

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RUSSELL, MAH

LETTER TO EDITOR: EXCEPTION IS TAKEN WITH CRITICS OF A RECENT PAPER ON CIGARETTE MODIFICATIONS WHO ADVOCATED REFERRING TO SUCH CIGARETTES AS "LESS LETHAL" RATHER THAN "SAFER".

"THE SWITCH TO FILTER-TIPPED CIGARETTES...HAS DONE MORE TO REDUCE SMOKING-RELATED DISEASE THAN HAVE TWO DECADES OF HEALTH EDUCATION AND ANTISMOKING PROPAGANDA.

"THE MORE RECENTLY DEVELOPED VENTILATED FILTERS ENABLE TAR, NICOTINE, AND CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) YIELDS TO BE REDUCED TO VERY LOW LEVELS. THIS MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR CIGARETTES TO BECOME EVEN LESS HAZARDOUS....

"I DO NOT CLAIM THAT SUCH CIGARETTES WOULD BE COMPLETELY SAFE, FOR NICOTINE IS UNLIKELY TO PROVE COMPLETELY SAFE. BUT THEY WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE THE RISK OF LUNG CANCER, WHICH IS CAUSED BY THE TAR, AND IF [THE HYPOTHESIS IS]...CORRECT ABOUT CO RATHER THAN NICOTINE BEING THE CAUSE OF SMOKING-RELATED CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE SUCH CIGARETTES WOULD REDUCE THE RISK OF THIS AS WELL."

/ECH/

(SEE ALSO DOCUMENT Nos. 39890 AND 39892.)

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